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SOURCE Shen Pao.

CHIN-HUA TO WU-I RAILWAY
TO SERVE RICH MINING AREA

At a meeting in Chin-hua on 22 January 1949, provincial and local leaders discussed plans for immediate rebuilding of the Chin-hua--Wu-i railway, the first of a number of railway projects in the province. The ties will be obtained locally, half of the cost to be borne by the provincial treasury and half apportioned among the adjacent hsien. Rails and other equipment will be transferred from supplies stored in Shang-hai. This includes steel bridge beams originally intended for the T'ien-ching--P'u-k'ou Railroad. A survey party is now busily engaged in making final plans, and work will start as soon as funds arrive from the Central Government.

In 1942 the Japanese made a drive down the newly constructed Chekiang-Kiangsi Railroad. In the vicinity of Chin-hua in Chekiang, they recognized the value of the fluorite deposits of near-by Wu-i Hsien and built with forced labor a 50-kilometer light railway connecting the producing areas with the main line.

During the war, by means of this light railway they shipped out large amounts of fluorite but in the spring of 1945, they stopped taking out this mineral, tore up the railway and shipped its rails elsewhere, leaving nothing but a roadbed.

The railway line passes through a region rich in minerals, including fluorite, coal, iron, and other natural resources. It is estimated that 400 tons of fluorite could be taken out daily for the next 50 years without fully exhausting the deposits. This ranks as one of the best sources of this mineral in the world. It is thought that it can be sold on the world market at a profit of 7 or 8 US dollars per ton. This would bring in considerable foreign exchange to help finance the rebuilding of the railway. Paper, cotton, and other local products would also add to the operating revenues.

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- 1 -

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